

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 913

Introduced by Assembly Member Saldana

February 18, 2005

An act to amend Section 5007 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 913, as introduced, Saldana. Vehicles: environmental license plates: disabled persons.

Existing law authorizes the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue, upon application and without additional fees, special license plates to disabled persons and disabled veterans. The special plates are required to run in a regular numerical series that includes one or more unique two-letter codes reserved for disabled person license plates or disabled veteran license plates. The International Symbol of Access, commonly known as the "wheelchair symbol," is required to be depicted on each plate.

Existing law authorizes the department to issue environmental license plates containing a combination of letters or numbers, or both, requested by the owner of the vehicle for which the plates are issued. Existing law imposes certain fees for the issuance, renewal, and transfer of environmental license plates, and requires the fees to be deposited in the Environmental License Plate Fund. The money in the fund is available, upon appropriation, for certain purposes relating to the preservation and protection of the state's environment.

This bill would authorize the department to issue, renew, and transfer the special license plates as environmental license plates, upon payment of the additional fees imposed under existing law for the issuance, renewal, and transfer of environmental license plates,

except that the environmental license plates issued under these provision would contain the International Symbol of Access specified above. The bill would require the department to deposit the additional fees in the Environmental License Plate Fund.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 5007 of the Vehicle Code, as added by
2 Section 8 of Chapter 404 of the Statutes of 2004, is amended to
3 read:

4 5007. (a) The department shall, upon application and without
5 additional fees, issue a special license plate or plates to a disabled
6 person or disabled veteran, pursuant to procedures adopted by the
7 department.

8 (b) ~~The~~ *Except as authorized under subdivision (f), the special*
9 license plates issued to a disabled person or disabled veteran
10 shall run in a regular numerical series that shall include one or
11 more unique two-letter codes reserved for disabled person license
12 plates or disabled veteran license plates. The International
13 Symbol of Access adopted pursuant to Section 3 of Public Law
14 100-641 *and* commonly known as the “wheelchair symbol” shall
15 be depicted on each plate.

16 (c) (1) Prior to issuing a special license plate to a disabled
17 person or disabled veteran the department shall require the
18 submission of a certificate, in accordance with paragraph (2),
19 signed by the physician or surgeon substantiating the disability,
20 unless the applicant’s disability is readily observable and
21 uncontested. The disability of a person who has lost, or has lost
22 use of, one or more lower extremities or one hand, for a disabled
23 veteran, or both hands for a disabled person, or who has
24 significant limitation in the use of lower extremities, may also be
25 certified by a licensed chiropractor. The blindness of any
26 applicant shall be certified by a licensed physician or surgeon
27 who specializes in diseases of the eye or a licensed optometrist.
28 The physician, surgeon, chiropractor, or optometrist certifying
29 the qualifying disability shall provide a full description of the
30 illness or disability on the form submitted to the department.

1 (2) The physician, surgeon, chiropractor, or optometrist who
2 signs a certificate submitted under this subdivision shall retain
3 information sufficient to substantiate that certificate and, upon
4 request of the department, shall make that information available
5 for inspection by the Medical Board of California or the
6 appropriate regulatory board.

7 (d) A disabled person or disabled veteran issued a license plate
8 or plates under this section shall, upon request, present to a peace
9 officer, or person authorized to enforce parking laws, ordinances,
10 or regulations, a certification form that substantiates the
11 eligibility of the disabled person or veteran to possess the plate or
12 plates. The certification shall be on a form prescribed by the
13 department and contain the name of the disabled person or
14 veteran to whom the plate or plates were issued, and the name,
15 address, and telephone number of the medical professional
16 described in subdivision (c) who certified the eligibility of the
17 person or veteran for the plate or plates.

18 (e) The special license plate shall, upon the death of the
19 disabled person or disabled veteran, be returned to the
20 department within 60 days or upon the expiration of the vehicle
21 registration, whichever occurs first.

22 (f) ~~This section shall become operative on July 1, 2005~~ Upon
23 receipt of the additional fees imposed under Sections 5106 and
24 5108, the department may issue, renew, and transfer the special
25 license plates authorized under this section as environmental
26 license plates, as defined in Section 5103, except that the
27 environmental license plates issued under this subdivision shall
28 contain the International Symbol of Access described in
29 subdivision (b). The department shall deposit the additional fees
30 in the Environmental License Plate Fund.